

Sergio Martinez Among The Best, But Opponents So, So...AVILA

Written by David A. Avila
Friday, 30 September 2011 07:40



Most believe Sergio Martinez represents the best of the best in pro boxing and though he would probably beat Floyd Mayweather, Manny Pacquiao and give Bernard Hopkins a good rumble, very few know him on the streets of America.

He's not a household name and it's not financially rewarding enough for Mayweather, Pacquiao or even Hopkins to fight Martinez when they can get more fighting other more well-known prizefighters.

When Miguel Cotto came to Los Angeles for a recent press conference and a pesky reporter asked him if he would fight Martinez the Puerto Rican answered "is there big money to fight him?"

The answer is no.

That's why the Argentine southpaw middleweight world champion Martinez (42-2-2, 26 KOs) with the lightning reflexes has been confined to title fights against Darren Barker (23-0, 14 KOs) on Saturday Oct. 1, at the Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City. HBO is televising but they're not offering big money to Martinez for the fight. Not Mayweather money or even Victor Ortiz kind of money.

Martinez can fight both Pacquiao and Mayweather who have both ventured into the 154-pound

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junior middleweight division but you will never hear those fighters mention the Argentine fighter's name as a possible opponent. It's one of the quirks in boxing that exists simply because of money.

"I would go down to 150 pounds to fight Manny Pacquiao," said Martinez, adding that Pacquiao captured the world title at the 154 pound junior middleweight level. "I'd like to fight Mayweather or the winner of Miguel Cotto and Antonio Margarito fight because those are fights that boxing fans would love to see."

But with Martinez fighting challengers like Barker, and Sergiy Dinziruk, who are good fighters with even less recognition, how can his promoters expect him to raise his own drawing power?

What most fight fans fail to realize is name recognition has more value than skills or a fighter's record. The boxer who can sell more tickets in an arena or pay-per-views on television has much more value than a fighter who is undefeated that nobody knows. Talent only takes you so far.

That's where challengers with more recognition like Marco Antonio Rubio, Sergio Mora, Danny Jacobs and even Shane Mosley can spark the attention of the general sports fan, not just the die hards.

One reason 35-year-old Martinez has remained one of the faceless is that he fought most of his career in Europe and South America. Another is he only speaks Spanish and that can be detrimental unless you have an engaging personality like a Roberto Duran or Alexis Arguello. Still, his knockout win over Paul Williams and overwhelming performance against Kelly Pavlik have quickly proven to boxing experts that the ultra quick southpaw Martinez is one of the very best prizefighters in the world pound for pound.

Martinez's next opponent Barker hails from London, England and outside of the United Kingdom or possibly Europe, the middleweight known as "Dazzling" Barker has even less recognition. But he's a middleweight contender and was deemed as a worthy opponent.

"You can never underestimate anyone," Martinez warns.

What someone should warn Martinez's promoters is that time is running out. No more Barkers please.

Two WBC titleholders

Martinez is the true WBC middleweight champion but that organization based in Mexico split the title by naming the Argentine the Diamond belt champion. Mexico's Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. won the lesser and more ordinary title by beating Sebastian Zbik in June.

The WBC organization and most other sanctioning bodies such as the WBA, WBO and IBF do this to enable themselves to collect more fees by having more world titles. It's one of the disturbing trends in boxing.

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Other Fight Chatter

Lorenz "The Monsoon" Larkin (12-0) of Riverside defeated veteran Nick Rossborough (20-15) by decision after three rounds at Las Vegas on Friday Sept. 23. It was Larkin's third consecutive win in a Strikeforce promoted mixed martial arts fight.

UFC light heavyweight champion Jon Jones retained the title and Josh Koscheck knocked out former champion Matt Hughes on the UFC 135 mixed martial arts card on Saturday in Denver. Other winners were Nate Diaz, Mark Hunt, Travis Browne, Tim Boetsch, Tony Ferguson, Takeya Mizugaki and Junior Assuncao.

WBO junior featherweight titleholder Ana Julaton (9-2-1) fights Mexico's Jessica Villafranca (12-3, 6 KOs) who just recently fought and loss to Moreno Valley's WBO bantamweight titleholder Kaliesha West. Julaton will fight Villafranca on Friday in Yucatan, Mexico. Earlier in the year Julaton fought Angel Gladney who West knocked out to win the title last year.

Ontario's Jonathan Arrellano (10-0-1) captured the WBC Youth title by decision over Michael Ruiz Jr. (8-1-1) after eight rounds on Friday Sept. 23. Other winners at the Doubletree Hotel were Riverside's Alex Viramontes, Richard Contreras, Sindy Amador, and Fernando Rojas.

WBO junior featherweight titleholder Jorge "El Travieso" Arce (58-6-2, 45 KOs) knocked out South Africa's Simphiwe Nongqayi (16-2-1) at 2:01 of round four on Saturday in Mexicali, Mexico. Arce had lost a decision to Nongqayi in their first meeting two years ago.

WBA junior welterweight titleholder Marcos Maidana (31-2, 28 KOs) retained the championship by stopping Petr Petrov (29-3-2, 13 KOs) at the end of round four. The title match took place in Argentina.

In Puerto Rico, two former world champions will try to get back on the win column as Juan Manuel Lopez (30-1, 27 KOs) fights Mike Oliver (25-2) and Roman Martinez (24-1-1, 15 KOs) clashes with Ramon Maas (25-1, 15 KOs) in a junior lightweight battle.

Undefeated Joan Guzman (30-0-1, 17 KOs) is scheduled to fight Armando Robles (17-1-1, 9 KOs) in a junior welterweight match in the Dominican Republic on Nov. 18. Guzman, 35, has a persistent problem making weight for his fights.

WIBA welterweight titleholder Anne Sophie Mathis (24-1, 21 KOs) defends against Cindy Serrano (15-3-2, 7 KOs) on Saturday Oct. 1 in France. Serrano fights out of Brooklyn, New York.

IBF cruiserweight titleholder Steve Cunningham (24-2, 12 KOs) defends against Yoan Hernandez (24-1, 13 KOs) on Saturday in Mecklenburg, Germany. Philadelphia's Cunningham has made a successful career out of fighting in Europe.

Eden Sonsona (27-6, 7 KOs) meets Godwin Tubigon (7-3-1) in a 10 round featherweight bout on Saturday Oct. 1, in Cebu City, in the Philippines. Also on the card will be Dodie Boy

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Penalosa (6-0) fighting Donriel Marcos (10-13) in a junior featherweight match.

Gavin Rees (35-1, 16 KOs) defends the EBU lightweight title against Derry Mathews (29-5, 15 KOs) on Saturday in Wales, United Kingdom. Rees has an eight-fight winning streak including a win over formerly undefeated Andy Murray.

Karim Mayfield (14-0-1, 9 KOs) fights Patrick Lopez (20-4, 12 KOs) in a junior welterweight clash at Fitzgerald's Casino in Tunica, Miss. The fight takes place on Saturday Oct. 1. Mayfield fights out of Northern California. Lopez, a Venezuelan, has fought numerous times in Ontario, Calif.

WBC junior featherweight titleholder Toshiaki Nishioka (38-4-3) makes his sixth title defense against former champion Rafael Marquez (40-6, 36 KOs) of Mexico City on Saturday in Las Vegas.

The city of Tianjin, China hosts a heavyweight fight pairing Chauncy Welliver (49-5-5, 19 KOs) of Washington against Rob Calloway (71-12-2, 57 KOs) on Monday Oct. 3. Calloway fights out of St. Joseph, Missouri.

WBO middleweight titleholder Dmitry Pirog (19-0, 15 KOs) stopped Gennady Martirosyan (22-3, 11 KOs) at the end of round 10. The title fight took place in Krasnodar, Russia on Sunday. It was Pirog's second title defense.

Argentina's Yessica Bopp (17-0, 7 KOs) retained the WBA junior flyweight world title by unanimous decision over Daniela Bermudez (5-2-2) after 10 rounds. The world championship fight took place on Saturday.

Diana Prozak (9-1, 7 KOs) retained the WIBA junior lightweight world title by technical knockout over Canada's Lindsay Garbatt (7-4-1) at the end of round nine. On the same card Melissa Hernandez (16-2-3) stopped Christina Tai (4-11) 54 seconds into round four. The two fights took place in Victoria, Australia.

America's Darnell "Ding-a-ling Man" Wilson (24-12-3) upset former heavyweight contender Juan Carlos Gomez (49-3, 27 KOs) of Cuba after 10 rounds by majority decision on Saturday in Germany. Wilson had lost seven of his last eight fights.

Mexico's Adrian Gonzalez (22-1-1, 14 KOs) retained the WBA and IBO junior flyweight world titles by knocking out Gideon Buthelezi (12-3) at 2:20 of round two. The match took place in Mexico City on Saturday Sept. 24.

Former world champion Jelena Mrdjenovich (25-8-1) of Canada snapped a three-fight losing streak by beating Fujin Raika by decision on Thursday Sept. 22 in Tokyo, Japan. The fight was a WBC junior lightweight elimination bout.

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Radam G says:

Wow! I don't believe that S & M -- I mean Sergio Martinez is that good. He has just fought the right hyped-up opponents at the right time and took down. I doubt that dude could go five rounds with Da Manny and 10 rounds with Money May, even at his natural middleweight weight. Boksing is the "threatre of the unexpected" and just straight strange. SM is just the latest hype because he beat da BIGGEST hypes, so now he is da HYPE who beat the hypes. Sucka cannot fight. Holla!

mortcola says:

Martinez is talented and very quick, but he uses those reflexes and intelligence to make up for a lack of polish. Cintron was in the fight when they fought; Williams was able to hit him a great deal in the first fight despite a very predictable offense; Pavlik, though half blind and slow, was able to confuse and dominate for stretches of their fight by making small adjustments, basic stuff like half-steps back and angles. Dzindziruk was a solid pro but not in this league. Sergio is a gifted athlete, but he is also 35...the weakness in fundamentals is gonna cost him more and more as time wears on.

FighterforJC says:

"El Bummo" Martinez thought that he would make noise by bashing Pacquiao. It got him NOTHING. NOTHING. NAAAAA AAAA THEEEEEEEENG!!!!!! LOL.

the Roast says:

Radam, Mort, and the Saint could be right. Sergio may just be one of those right place, right time guys. He beat Pavlik who obviously has his problems, and Paul Williams who was vastly overrated by me and many others. The hands down chin dangling style of Martinez will get him beat. I would pick Floyd or Pac over Sergio at 150. Sergio would be in a no lose situation at 150. He loses and just has to say the weight drain was too much for him. Best move for Serg would be 168 with Bute, Ward, Froch, or maybe Hopkins.

FighterforJC says:

Old guys with non-boxer faces shouldn't get in the ring.

Radam G says:

@the Roast, who in da heck is the Saint" I've seen him in a minute. Did he ever come to the new Universe? Holla!

the Roast says:

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@Radam, It is widely belived amongst the Regs that Fighter4JC is the Saint. The Saint was banned but returned under a new name.

brownsugar says:

it was admirable that Sergio took a victim of bullying under his wing... the story is far fresher than ..." I've been Orpaned"... Barker was showing just enough technical ability to survive and Sergio then turned up the heat the way true competitors do... but the KO punch was a strange and enigmatic event as it looked like Marivella only hit gloves... maybe he forced the laces into Barkers mouse and subsequent intense pain. But untill Pac or Floyd green lite a megafight...Sergio still has unfinished work at 160.....Quillen and Pirog have been begging for a fight harder that ODLH and Ortiz have been clamering for a Mayweather rematch. Show us you are the truth and fight guys at 160 with some name recongition.

Radam G says:

Wow! I didn't know that the Saint was banned. But where is Isaiah, Smiley, Koolaid, Ruby, Solo, Saul, Andy of Newcastle, your girls BoxeAnne and AsherG -- or whatever her pseudonym was -- and where is Smokey, Da Don, the troublemaker Anony, Big Daddy and somemore suckas who I cannot think of right now? Did you send smoke signal for 'em, the Roast? Holla!